

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### Graduated License Bill Passes House



#### *Legislation Cosponsored By Rep. Giegler Passes Overwhelmingly*

**HARTFORD-** On Wednesday, April 20, legislation cosponsored by State Rep. Janice Giegler, R-138th, that places restrictions on sixteen and seventeen-year-old drivers was overwhelmingly approved by the House of Representatives.

The new bill, approved in a 118-23 vote, fine-tunes legislation passed into law in 2003. It increases the mandated hours behind the wheel for driver training from eight hours to twenty hours, and eliminates restrictions on the age of parents who are passengers in a motor vehicle operated by a sixteen or seventeen-year old, but requires at least one of them to hold an operators license. The legislation also prohibits a sixteen or seventeen-year old who has an operator's license from driving between midnight and 5:00 a.m. unless the person is driving for work or a school activity, or out of medical necessity. Exemptions are made for ambulance, fire and EMS personnel who are sixteen or seventeen years of age.

"We need to encourage our young new drivers but at the same time permit them to gain the necessary experience needed to safely operate a motor vehicle," said Rep. Giegler. "Every other New England state has established curfews for drivers under age 18 and it is important that Connecticut do the same to help ensure the safety of our youth."

Statistics have demonstrated conclusively that the first few months of a new driver's licensure are critical, and is the period of time when a new driver is most likely to get into a fatal accident. Quite often, the other young occupants in their car distract these young new drivers. According to data compiled by the State Department of Transportation, 16 and 17-year-old drivers are 14% more likely to cause a crash resulting in fatalities or injuries while transporting one passenger than while driving alone.

The legislation, ***House Bill 5446, An Act Concerning Additional Training and Restrictions for Drivers Under the Age of Eighteen***, now moves to the State Senate.

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Rep. Giegler represents sections of Danbury and New Fairfield in the General Assembly.